



**USAID**  
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

**CROATIA**

## ACTIVITY OVERVIEW

# Healthy Community Program



*"If you drink don't drive!" poster developed by a participating 6th grader in Split*

AIHA

### **Project completed ... 2004**

Alcohol abuse in Croatia has become one of the most serious problems and inflicts the greatest harm to youth. According to the USAID-funded 2002 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, 82% of the youth in the city of Split (population of 189,000) between the ages of 8 and 16 had their first drink of alcohol and 21% had their first drink before they were 10 years old.

USAID established the "Healthy Community" partnership with the City of Split. This program addressed the alcohol abuse problem and associated behavior among the youth.

Project Northland was a community based alcohol prevention program designed for school children between the ages of 10 and 14 that strived to delay the age at which young people begin drinking, to reduce alcohol abuse among those who already tried drinking, and to limit alcohol related problems. Project Northland also strived to change how parents communicate with their children, how peers influence each other, and how communities respond to adolescent alcohol use.

This USAID-funded program improved the capacity to mobilize community resources, promote community participation, and implement interventions that improved the overall quality of life and address the special needs of this vulnerable group.

**Results** In 2002, the City of Split successfully administered a Youth Risk Behavioral Survey (YRBS) to 1,000 students between the ages of 12-17 in seventeen schools in Split. YRBS results were used to address issues facing the City's youth including alcoholism, mental health, and eating disorders.

Following the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey, over 1,300 sixth graders participated in Project Northland that addressed alcohol abuse in youth. The first year of the three-year Project Northland curriculum was successfully implemented in 13 schools in the city of Split. A second group of 10 teachers were trained on how to use Project Northland.

Implementer: American International Health Alliance (AIHA)

Partners: City of Split; Consortium of New Jersey Public Health Organizations; University of Medicine and Dentistry of the New Jersey School of Public Health.